

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: □ Mr. Speaker, this bill will place over 40 chemical compounds on Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act at a time when only eight of these substances can even be found in the United States. And it does so in a way that circumvents the normal process, that skirts scheduling substances, and does so without any scientific or medical research or evidence to support it.

Congress has a process for placing substances on drug schedules. The Criminal Code sets forth a process that the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services must engage in to determine the propriety of scheduling substances. The Secretary must conduct a scientific and medical evaluation and provide recommendations about whether the substances being analyzed need to be controlled. And this needs to be a scientific study, not a compilation of anecdotes.

In this there is a mechanism for addressing emergencies. In the case where the Attorney General on his own determines that there is an emergency, the Code provides that substances may be placed on Schedule I for up to 1 1/2 years while the evidence is being developed to permanently schedule them.

Moreover, the Judiciary Committee during our consideration received numerous statements from pharmaceutical and medical researchers imploring us not to hamper their ability to determine possible medical uses of these substances by placing them on Schedule I, which makes it illegal to possess these substances without a permit even for research purposes.

This includes promising research on the cure for Parkinson's disease that would be compromised by this bill. Now, even with a permit, the restrictions placed on researchers once they are placed on Schedule I are unduly onerous. So there are legal uses of these substances.

Mr. Speaker, when Congress established a process for the Secretary and the Attorney General to do their due diligence and study the propriety of placing substances on Schedule I, we've had a very thoughtful process. And if we want to establish good crime policy, we need to follow that thoughtful process. H.R. 1254 circumvents that process. For these reasons, I urge a "no" vote on H.R. 1254.